

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. Claims 17-25 have been withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement. Claims 1-8 and 11-16 have been amended. Claims 9 and 10 have been canceled. Claims 1-8 and 11-25 are now pending in this application.

I. Rejection of Claims 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 10-16 as being indefinite because Claim 10 recites the limitation “each column” without sufficient antecedent basis for this limitation. Applicants have canceled Claim 10 rendering this rejection moot. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

II. Objection to the Abstract

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract of the disclosure because “not all of the reference numerals are in parenthesis.” Applicants have amended the Abstract to remove all of the reference numerals. Therefore, Applicants respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to the Abstract.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that Claims 7-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for recognizing the allowable subject matter recited in Claims 7-9.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

On page 3 of the Office Action, Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated over French Patent No. 2758188 to Lamontagne. While not conceding the propriety of the rejections, Applicants have amended Claims 1-6 to clarify the claim language and to incorporate the elements of allowed and now canceled Claim 9.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

V. Rejection of Claims 10-16 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

On page 4 of the Office Action, Claims 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated over International Publication No. WO 00/50171 of Fraudeau *et al.* While not conceding the propriety of the rejections, Applicants have canceled Claim 10 and amended Claims 11-16 to depend from Claim 1 which has been amended to clarify the claim language and to incorporate the elements of allowed and now canceled Claim 9. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

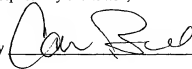
Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by the credit card payment instructions in EFS-Web being incorrect or absent, resulting in a rejected or incorrect credit card transaction, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

By



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